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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

# INFORMATION REPORT

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INTELLOFAX 25

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1. In the spring of 1951, the DDR Government conceived a plan for constructing a large coke plant for the Eisenhüttenkombinat Ost (EKO) in the Fürstenberg region. The plant was to cover the total demand of coke of the combine which, according to plan, was to produce 1.4 million tons of pig iron per year beginning on 1 January 1953. The plant, as envisaged by the DDR Government and according to plans worked out by the State Planning Commission, was to process, for this purpose, 4,800 tons of mineral coal (Steinkohle) per day into 3,750 tons of coke per day. Of this amount, 3,000 tons per day were to be high quality blast furnace coke.

2. The execution of this plan was dependent upon the following points:

   a. Securing of coal deliveries sufficient for the contemplated purpose. Since the DDR is not a mineral coal producing country, this coal was to be imported.

   b. Securing of fireproof material needed for the construction of the plant. This material, too, was to be imported.

   c. Securing of the blueprints, drafts, etc., needed for the construction of a modern coke plant. Such plans were not available in the DDR. German firms with long-standing experience in the construction of coke plants are located in West Germany (Dr. Otto, Bochum; Koppers, Essen, and Didier-Kogag-Hinselmann, Essen).
   The DDR Government decided to send Minister Fritz Selbmann to Poland and the CSR for the purpose of arranging delivery of the necessary materials, primarily coal, from these two countries to the DDR.

3. Selbmann visited Poland from 28 May to 1 June 1951, and the CSR from 5 June to 8 June 1951. He was accompanied, on both trips, by an engineer of Hauptverwaltung Metallurgie of his Ministry, an engineer of the Iron Research Institute in Bennigsdorf, a technician of Eisenhüttenwerk Thale, and a coal expert of the Zentralamt für Forschung und Technik (ZAFT) of the State Planning Commission.

4. In Katowice, Poland, Selbmann and his party met Polish Deputy Minister for Metallurgical Industry, Zemanek, and the coke and coal refining expert of that Ministry, engineer Alexander Szpilewicz, who, at the time of the visit, worked in a branch office, in Katowice, of the Ministry for Metallurgical Industry,

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Warsaw, Koneza 2[illegible]. He was later transferred to the Ministry in Warsaw. Members of the German party were allowed to visit the **Central Construction Office in Zabrze and to inform** themselves of available plans. Selbmann's request for permission to visit a new large mining combine which, at the time of the visit was under construction, near **Cracow**, was refused by Zemaykis. The German party was allowed to visit the Central Office for Materials in Gliwice for negotiations concerning delivery of fire-proof material.

5. Following is the result of the visit to Poland with respect to the DDR plan of establishing a large coke plant dependent upon deliveries from Poland:

a. Poland was not in a position to deliver coke coal to the DDR. Poland was ready to assume the obligations of delivering 2,000 tons per day of gas coal which only by mixture with high-quality coke coal could be used for the production of blast furnace coke. Since the envisaged German coke plant was to process 4,800 tons of coal per day, the Polish offer necessitated finding another source for delivery of 2,800 tons of high-quality coke coal per day. The Poles justified their refusal to deliver coke coal to a new DDR coke plant by pointing out, generally, that Poland has hardly enough coke coal for its own expanding industry, and, in particular, that Poland, upon Russian orders, has been and continues to be the main supplier of coke to the DDR Hüttenkombinat Ost and of coke coal to DDR coke plants which, in turn, provide the coke needed by EKO.

b. Poland could deliver fireclay, firebricks and fireproof mortar from the Stella works in Chrzanow, Skawina, and Gliwice. Engineer **Tocharski**, in charge of production and distribution of fireproof material in the Central Office for Materials, guaranteed delivery of these materials in sufficient quantities. He pointed out, however, that Poland was not in a position to deliver **silica** stones, since Poland was in a critical position herself in regard to this item.

c. The Central Construction Office in Zabrze was in possession of complete plans for the construction of coke oven batteries. On the basis of these blueprints, a battery with 35 ovens was built for the Gliwice coke plant, which started to operate in January 1951. Furthermore, two batteries with 28 ovens each were built for the Makoscow coke plant; they started to operate in October 1951. The plans available concerned construction of coke oven batteries of the Dr. Otto type, i. e., with DC current heating. These plans were obtained from the firm Otto, Bochum, West Germany. The Central Construction Office also had plans for the construction of coke plant equipment other than oven batteries.

6. The Selbmann party's trip to the CSR was undertaken after it became clear that the Poles could not fill the main requirement for the planned DDR coke plant, delivery of coke coal. The party went to **Moravska Ostrava** and Prague. The CSR Government had delegated engineer Boroviz to negotiate with the German Party. The result:

a. The CSR coke coal situation was even worse than the Polish. The CSR was not in a position to deliver to the DDR the smallest amount of coke coal, regardless of quality. The Czechs feared that they would be short of coke coal after completion of a new coke plant under construction in [illegible].

b. Czechoslovakia was sufficiently supplied with fireproof materials for her own demands. Firebrick factory **Vitkovice** is a supplier of firebricks; Horni Briza (formerly Westböhmische Schamotte-und Kaolinwerke) is a furnisher of **silica** stones.

c. The CSR was in possession of plans for the construction of a coke plant of the Koppers type. Koppers, Essen, built such a plant during the German occupation in **Moravska Ostrava**. The Czechs copied the plans of the Koppers installation; these plans are kept in the construction office of the Skoda works, Pilsen. The Czechs were, however, not in a position to build a coke plant which differs essentially- be it only in scale- from the old Koppers drafts. In addition to these plans, the Czechs had the following drafts in the construction office of the iron works at **Vitkovice**:

deep bunker for coal, capacity 3,000 tons,
[illegible] tons in 14 hours,
coal mixture installation, capacity 7,000 tons,
coal tower, capacity 3,000,

coke separation installation,
gas container.

7. After Minister Selbmann made reports to the DDR Government on the results of the two trips, the latter abandoned the plan for construction of a coke plant for EKO. All hopes concerning the possibility of coke coal import of adequate quality and in sufficient quantity were ultimately eliminated when engineer **Szplewics** of the Warsaw Metallurgical Ministry reported, during a visit to the DDR State Planning Commission and ZAFT in February 1952, that Poland as well as the CSR were themselves now seriously threatened by a shortage of coke coal. The DDR Government, thus, not only saw its plans fail as far as construction of a new coke plant is concerned, but also sees a serious threat to continued delivery of coke and coke coal from Poland for use in Hüttenkombinat Ost. The DDR Government hopes to meet this threat by construction of a new large lignite coke plant in Lauchhammer near Senftenberg; this plant is scheduled to be completed by 1 January 1953. The plant will produce coke from lignite which can not be used as blast furnace coke but is suitable for the chemical industry. At present, considerable amounts of mineral coal (Steinkohle) are used in the chemical industry. These will be used for the production of blast furnace coke, if an adequate lignite substitute can be produced in sufficient quantity for use in the chemical industry and for other purposes not involving blast furnace operations. Development of lignite coke in an experimental plant in Delitzsch near Leipzig has met with success. This plant at present produces 10 tons of lignite coke per day which has a tenacity of about 160 kg/cm$^2$ (per square cm) when cold, and about the same tenacity in fire.

25X1A [redacted] **Comment:** Not identified from available reference material.